THOUGHTS & IMAGES

ALBEDO

NR. 5
$2.00

ANTHROPOMORPHICS

CAN. $2.50

Here we go again. The last few weeks have been awfully interesting. Plenty of sales, improved retailer interest, and the first glimmers of possibly making break-even, give me the optimism to keep doing this nasty rag. And nasty it is, with *gasp!* bath scenes and scandalous silhouettes. I'm sorry, I thought I could keep everything clean, but no, things just got out of hand and now we all have to suffer these immoral excesses.

But enough of that. On to the future. The next issues look like they will be coming out on a regular bi-monthly schedule. Oboy. And more contributing artists. Double oboy. For Nr. 6, Deal Whitley will present an episode of **WRAB** pirate television's **HIGH ORBIT**. Who can say who will appear in other future issues? I certainly can't. As for other odds and ends, Nr. 1 and Nr. 2 are still and ever out of print, though a reprint/origins of **Erma Felna** is being planned. As always, the fantasy project that I've been planning with Steve Adams is still in progress; however, a new title is being sought, as *Sworddancer* is going to be the title for someone else's novel next year.

Nr. 0, the prototype issue is still available, $1.00 gets it first class. Original art from Nrs. 2, 3, 4 is available for $50.00 per page. Just my stuff, though, and list alternatives in case your first choice is already sold. Then there's the three issue limited subscriptions for $6.00, again make sure you state which issues you want. Next year, I might live dangerous and try for annual subscriptions. Lastly, there's all the secondary marketing items. **Erma Felna** and **Albedo** T-shirts are still on hand for $8.00 in 50/50 cotton/poly light blue. If there is enough interest, 100% cotton shirts are possible. And the possibility of new designs and other products, like portfolios, gaming aid type technical information, and maybe even miniatures? Anyone want to help make 'em? More important, anyone want to buy 'em?

Argh! such is the fate for those who don't plan well enough in advance. Forgot to list distributors in the back and didn't design the front properly, so I've got to fill the hole here with them, the morning this goes to press. First, a plug and thanks to Perry Plush at ZANADU COMICS, inside the Paperback Exchange, 209 UNION ST, SEATTLE. 98101 FOR carring ALBEDO since day one. the ATTIC, in Moscow, Idaho, has too, (IN FACT, MAY BE THE ONLY PLACE TO FIND 1ST PRINTS OF NR. 0). But I don't have the new address. As for the distributors — Pod Plant, Inc. Po. 1886. Grassvalley. CA. 95945 — Second Genesis, 1112 NE. 21 Portland. OR 97232 — Capital City Distribution, Inc., 2827 Perry St. Madison, WI. 53713 — anyone else is welcome to handle 'em, too!

ALBEDO NR 5 © 1985 Steven A. Gallacci Individual stories © 1985 by the respective artists.
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EDF HIGH COMMAND, FANTUR

You realize, of course, that this is sociopolitical warfare, and we are hamstrung even to defend ourselves, even less ConFedSpace.

No one will acknowledge the threat, leaving us to respond only after the fact.

This would be an interesting theoretical problem - but it isn't, and it's going to cost. Cost entirely too much.

FELNA RESIDENCE, DORNTHANT

So how's - ?

oh - No difference. But how are you? I saw the flash about Itzack's ship.

ERMA FELNA EDF ©1985 S.A. GALLAGHER

IT'S Bud Plant! Bud Plant! REALLY!! I'M SORRY! ARGH!! LAST MINUTE TYPO!
AND THE TYPESETTING FOR ERMA FELNA, EDF WAS DONE BY WESTERN TYPE.

Yes. But I was notified only that he was safe.
No word about his ship or whatever happened with the Chishata system.

Yes, "safe and well"
"Safe and well", words bitterly remembered by these wives, whose husbands returned from action, sound of limb but crippled in spirit.

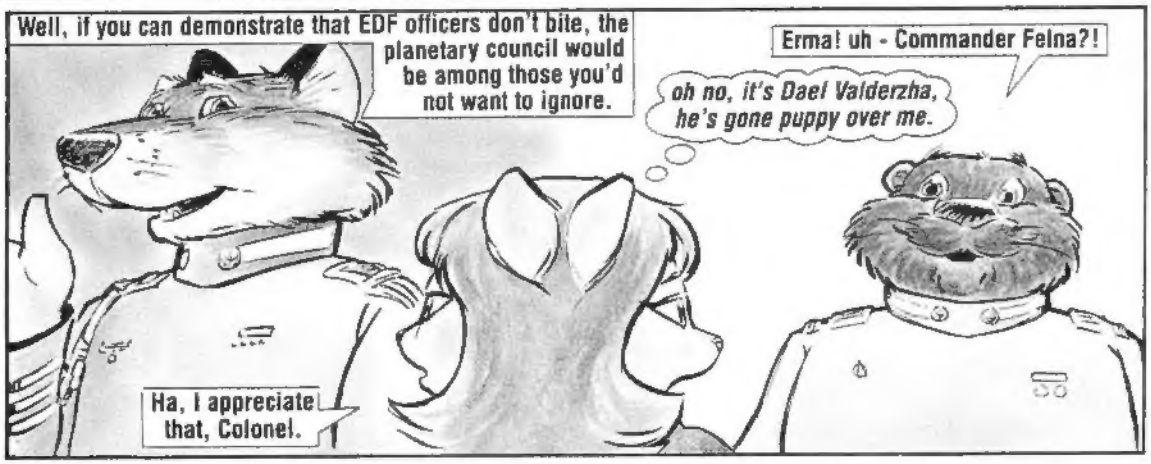
Have you heard from your Erma?
Just routine notes. She writes like a command summary report.

But she won't tell what's so important about her assignment. Now that she's out of combat, there's no reason why she can't be stationed closer to home.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, EKOSIAK

Commander Felna, I'm pleased to see you here.
Colonel Hitzok, thank you.

There's quite a number of Very Importants here tonight.
uhmm Anyone I need worry about?


Well, if you can demonstrate that EDF officers don't bite, the planetary council would be among those you'd not want to ignore.
Ha, I appreciate that, Colonel.
Erma! uh - Commander Felna?!
oh no, it's Dael Valderzha, he's gone puppy over me.

Could we dance or something?
Well, I've got to mingle a bit - but I'd be delighted to share a dance with you later.

BLISS!
thank goodness the rest of the command isn't like that. couldn't ever get any work done.
hum - he is sort of cute, in an otter kit sort of way.

Diplomacy has not been part of Erma's formal training, but she has more than enough intelligence and charm to impress the various dignitaries.
Hey! You, EDF! You're at Derzon! So tell us, what really happened, EH?!
And who -?
Lazlow Kosak, System News Net! I saw the dispatches on you! A real warrior maiden, eh? So, whatcha doing with ALL those males at Zeetoo, uhmhmm?
Why don't you ask one of those males. Lazlow?
Colonel! ulp! I didn't mean anything - ah - ooh.
Commander, I don't think the two of you have been properly introduced. Lazlow here is a local muck-racker, likable chap who really wouldn't think of hacking out some "expose" about the guard
Especially since he's on parole for misuse of media nets, libe, and privacy code violations, uhm?
oog!

Oh thank you Colonel for the rescue. Keeping an eye on me?
Well, not you exactly.
Ooh, I see what's caught your command attention.
uhm - Yes and thinking of such,
I think your dance partner is here.
!!!
Gosh, Commander, it's really swell, dancing with you. Glad you could make the party. I'm here 'cause of my family. Really like the training problems you came up with last week. Tried the canapes? I've been flying AeroFours since I joined. You know we're getting some more live fire exercises? The rest of the guys think you're swell, too. Even Thothon, and he doesn't even like Fanturii. Everyone likes Fanturii, don't you?
oh, hush up and dance.
!
Oh, what a night! the Colonel finally getting personable, making favorable impressions on the People-That-Count, and once I got him to keep his mouth shut, Dael is a great dancer.

debate continues over the EDF "rescue" of Derzon. C
ve posted formal objections to the excessive use of for
e action. While EDF officials have admitted that they a
assessing their proceedures, they insist that the on-sit
mmanders acted well within their legel and appropria
meters and none are guilty of error of misconduct. Tha

Okay, channel three's fine.

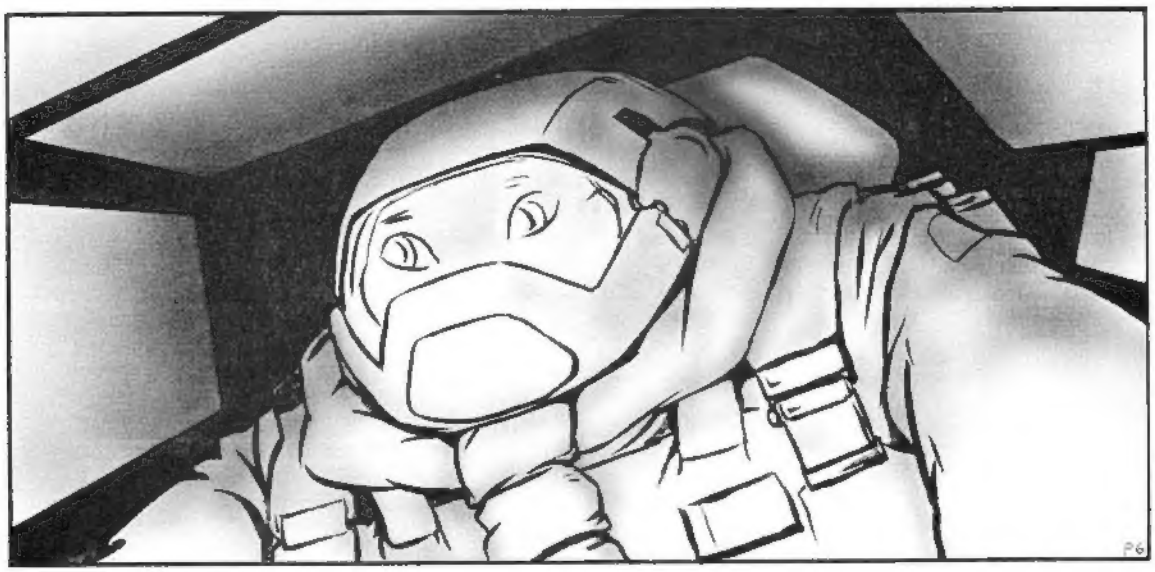
Uh, Lazlow's really milking the Derzon thing.

s intresting in that many senior officers involved hav
since been dispersed. One of these, Flight Commander
rma Felna, a major participant in the surface assault is
tationed here at Zetoo. She has refused all contact or c
about her participation or reasons for her reassignment

yeah, but the ratings are worth it.

there's a light on public access five. See what they want.

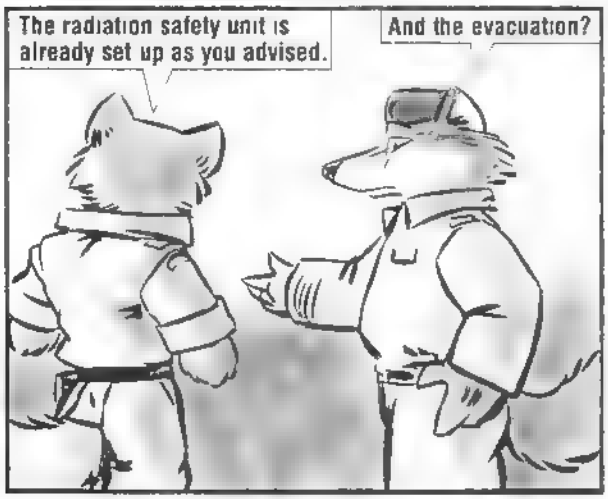
Hi guys! Got a big suprise for ya! It's a megaton bang stashed in town, and ya got an hour! Have fun!

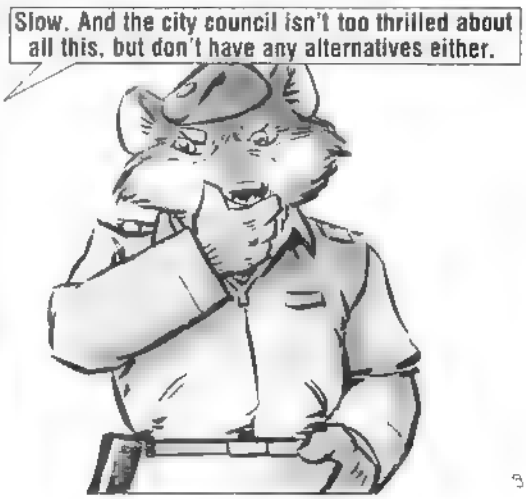


Bandit leader! This is Bandit Three! There's a target coming through sector!
Come on, Bandit Leader! I'm out of position for an intercept!
AWK!! I'm hit! I'm hit! Main power out!
Relax, commander, we've got an alert.
What's going on?
There's been a nuclear bomb set in town.
P7

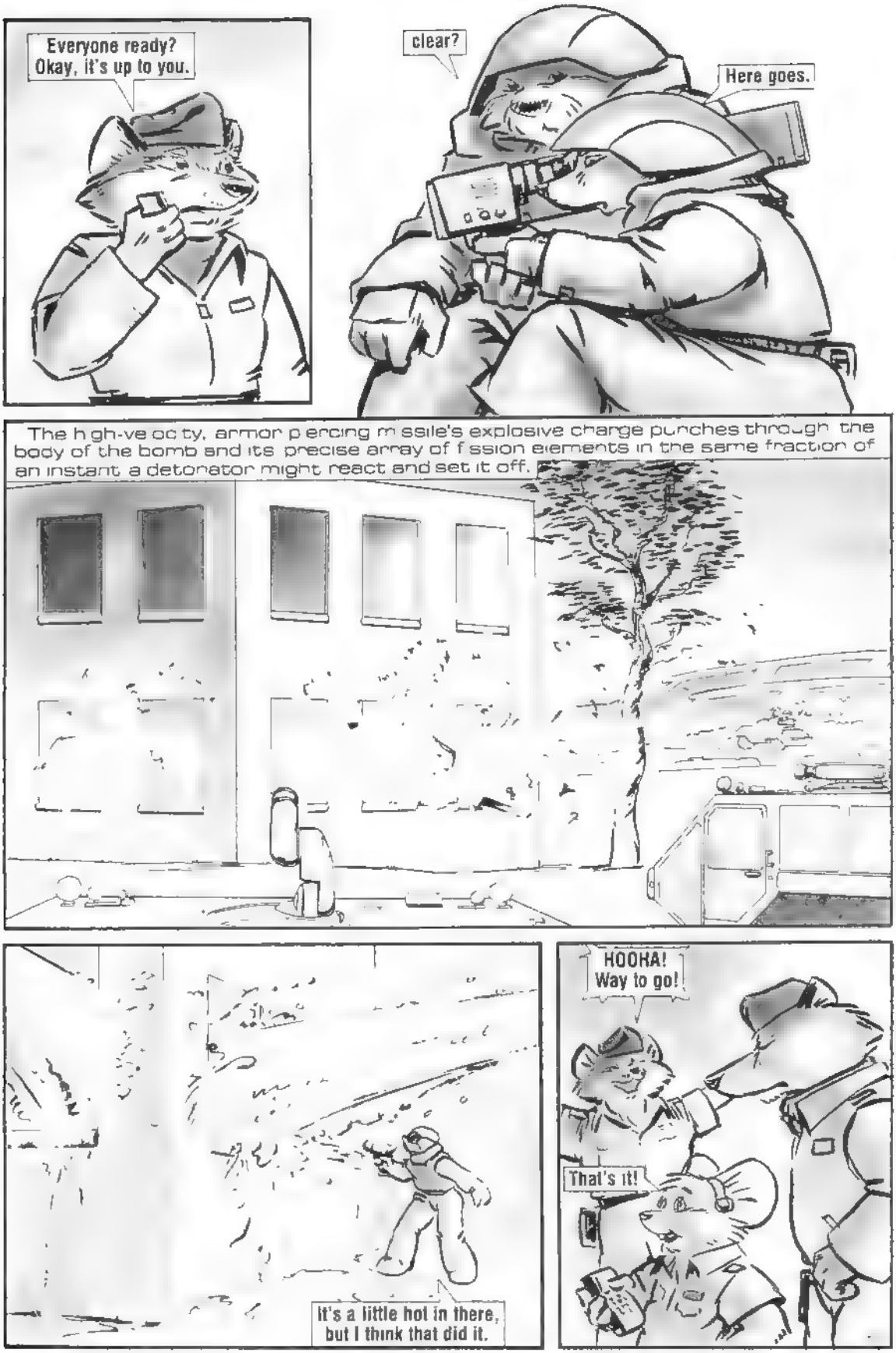
The colonel wants you in the Comm center.
Where is he?
En route. He wants to be on site.
Some manner of terrorists announced their intentions on the net just a couple of minutes ago.
We were lucky to be able to have sensors aloft to find it.
How could this happen?
Don't you have regular monitors?
Of course not! We don't need that kind of police state mentality!
Hello? Colonel, have you got a plan to deal with it?
Honestly no.
It's assumed there are anti-tampers and such on it.
uhmm - Yes
There is something you might want to try.
P8

It's down there on the first floor.





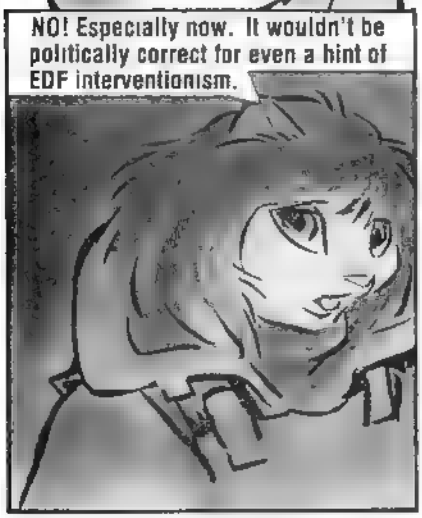
That should be the fire team.
You'll be able to get a good line-of-sight from up the road.
Still there?
Still there.
Remember, regardless of what happens, proceed as planned. Lots of mist and foam.


Everyone ready? Okay, it's up to you.
clear?
Here goes.
The high-velocity, armor piercing missile's explosive charge punches through the body of the bomb and its precise array of fission elements in the same fraction of an instant a detonator might react and set it off.
It's a little hot in there, but I think that did it.
HOOHA! Way to go!
That's it!

Kaih!
Commander! What a call!
Ooh Yah! You did it!

No, no! All I did was suggest, the Colonel did the important part.

In fact, I want a security lid on this. No mention of my participation at all.
Why?!
Uh?
Commander, you -

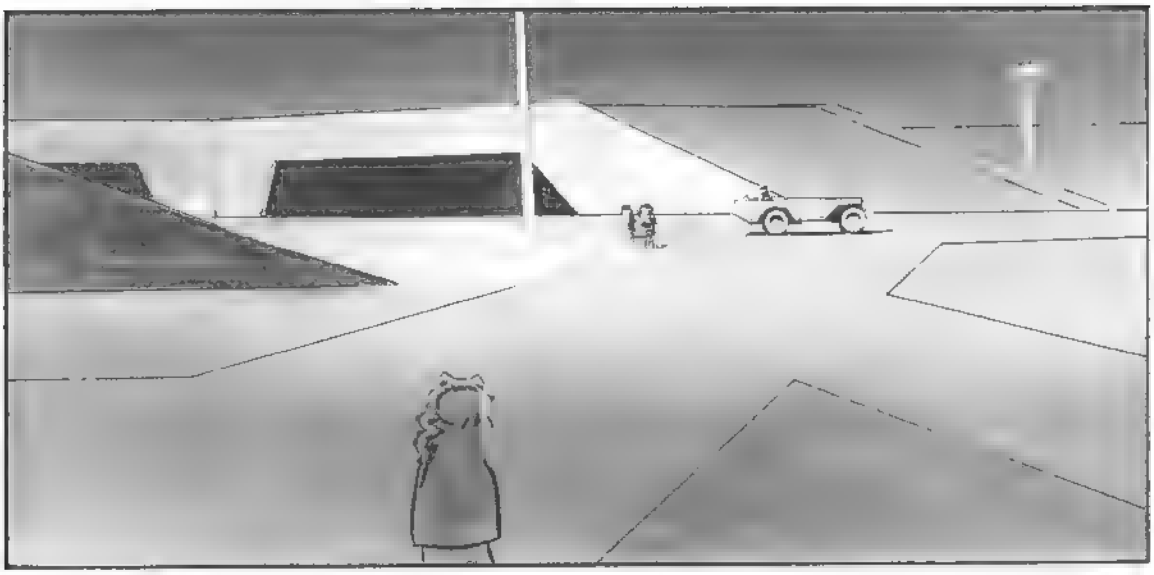

NO! Especially now. It wouldn't be politically correct for even a hint of EDF interventionism.

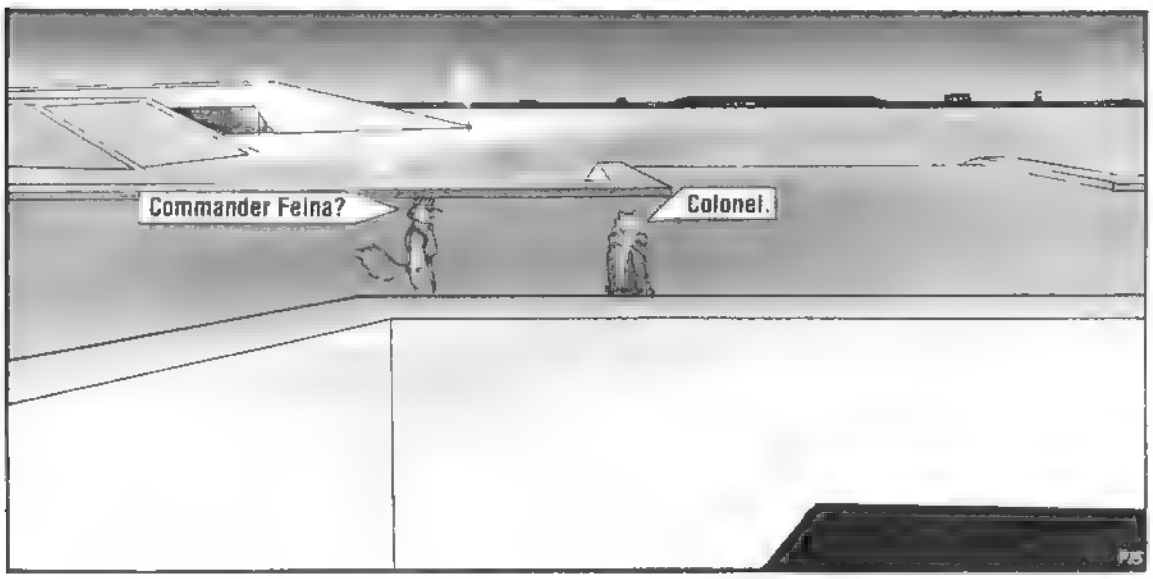
I trust formal security oaths are not necessary?

Now I'll need an edit of those communications. EDF priority. Scrub all but command access copies.

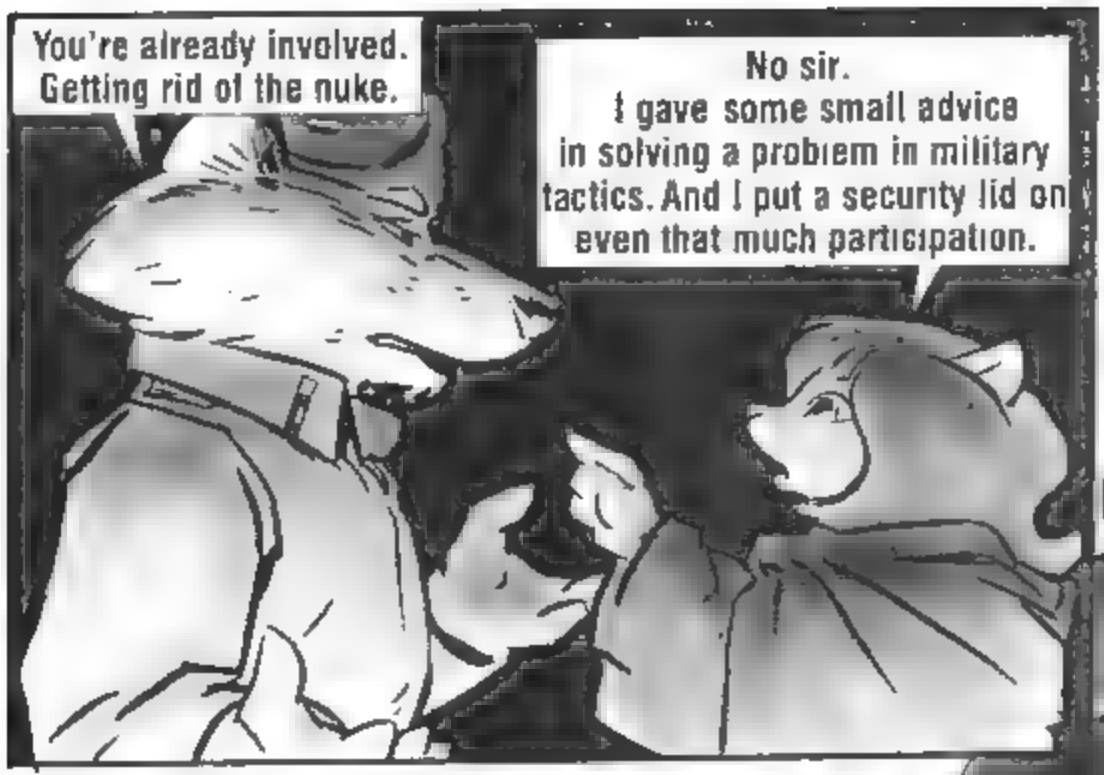
Damn! the one thing I don't need is more unnecessary attention drawn to myself.
Wonder what all this is going to come to?
Uggh. glad to be out of this suit.
now what's going on here? they don't have security monitors and "surprise" someone slips in a nuke.

which will lead to a freedom versus security battle creating even more polarization.
Computer. Dictating a report on the terrorist nuclear incident.
Classified secret, single releases to Ekosiak Defense Council, commander, Ekosiak Homeguard, ConFed Secretary Shatoo, and relay packet to EDF Regional Command.
Uhmm - Computer, see if I'm required anywhere?
No Ma'm. The alert has been downgraded to level two, active monitoring only.
Is there a formal mess tonight?
No Ma'm. Individual schedual tonight.
I'm going out for a walk. If anyone needs me, I've got my peeper.




Commander Feina?
Colonel.

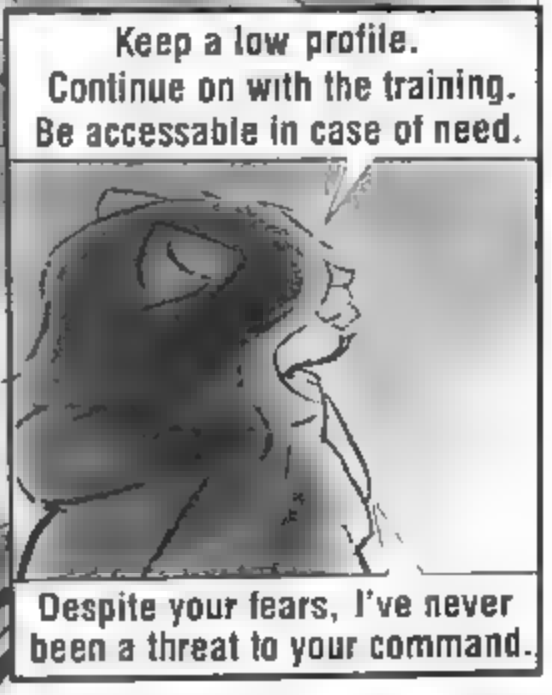
Read your report, most astute.
Thank you.
There's an anonymous rumor that ConFedCentre was behind the device.
I was afraid of that. I wonder if it's the Freedom Party.
They want compleate independence from ConFed and unmonitored civil liberties.
They could claim ConFed was trying to scare Ekosiak into line and force suppressive monitoring, "for the safety and security of all".
They would then argue that if completely free of ConFed, they would be safe from staged demonstrations and not need security monitoring.
Basically, the only risks of crisis are those ConFed it's self creates to rationalize its existence.
Or the Security Party did it and are using the mistrust of ConFed to hide their own agenda.
Oh, but I'm just rambling. I shouldn't -
No, no. Most insightful.
So - which way do you think I should go?
You know I can't get involved in political activities.


You're already involved. Getting rid of the nuke.
No sir. I gave some small advice in solving a problem in military tactics. And I put a security lid on even that much participation.

You saved Hicho from nuclear annihilation.
You're a hero, in a position of authority and respect.

There's more trouble coming, and if things get really bad, those assets could make all the difference.

And what about you, Commander?


Keep a low profile. Continue on with the training. Be accessable in case of need.
Despite your fears, I've never been a threat to your command.

Not only would it be intolerable, given the political climate.
It would be in violation of law and regulation, and more important, my orders.

You see, my assignment here was primarily punitive.
Higher headquarters has no use for females in command battle positions.

Emergency call, Colonel Hitzok.
WHA!

Commander Felna, there's a rabble at the gates.

The monorail station has already been bypassed and the accesses to the spaceport secured. Most of the crowd, about two thousand, are here at the south gate.

What's going on?

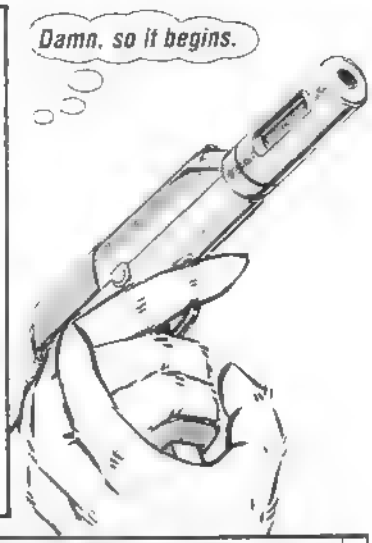
Oh, you haven't seen the morning newsies.

It's a protest of the "inflammatory military presence" and the occasional anti-EDF buzz.

It's not a pretty crowd, the nuke yesterday scared them and now they're angry. But they're not too unruly

But be advised, they are armed.

Odear! I trust you-all will be careful out there.


Damn, so it begins.

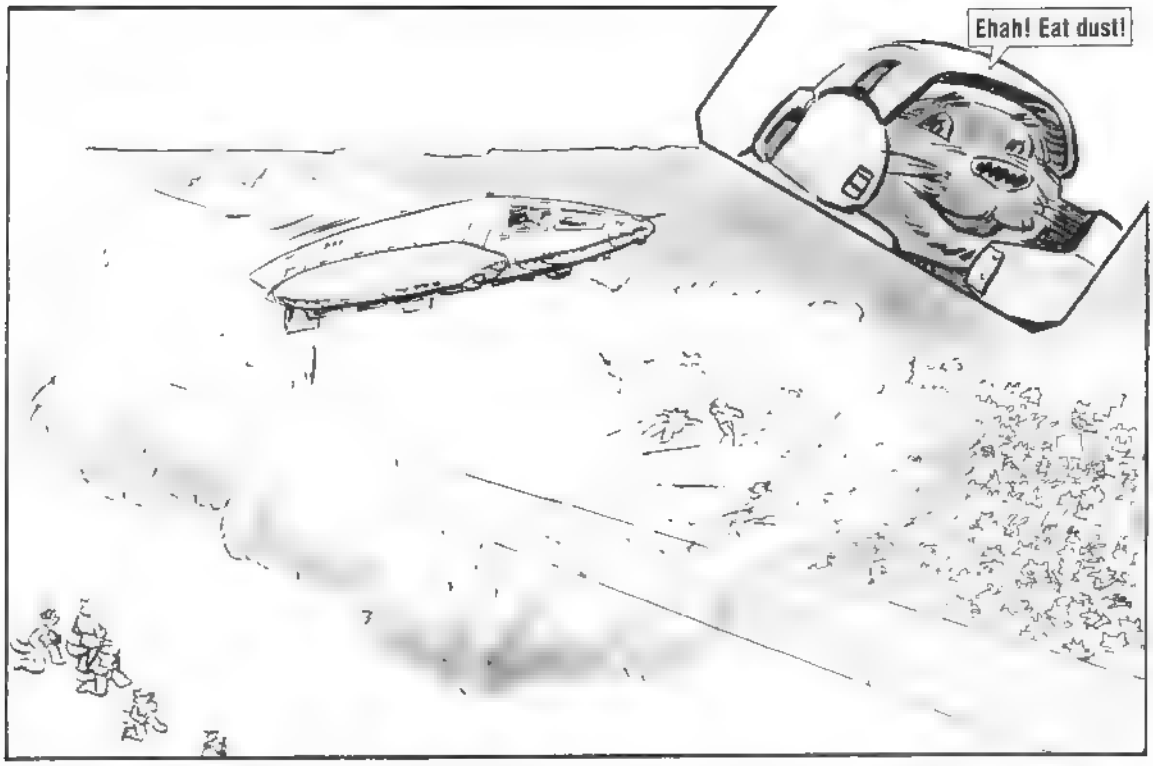
ATTENTION! ATTENTION ALL YOU PEOPLE! I SUSPECT I CAN'T CONVINCE YOU TO DISPERSE. ON THE OTHER HAND,
IF YOU FORCIBLY ENTER THE BASE- WE ARE PREPARED TO USE DEADLY FORCE TO MAINTAIN OUR SECURITY.

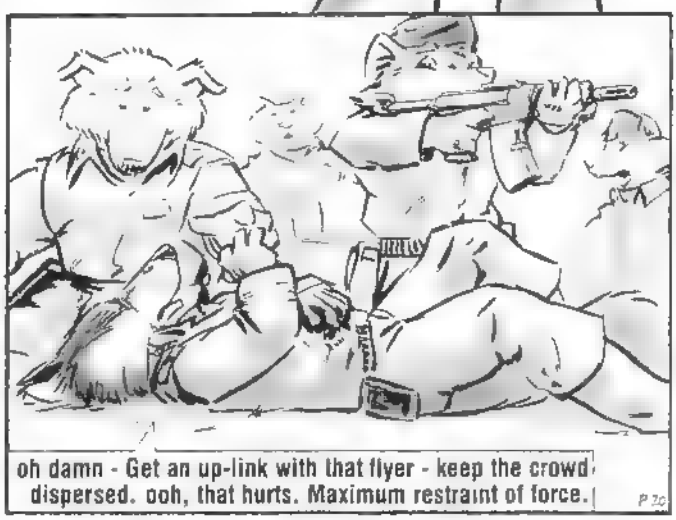
SO FAR, NO LAWS HAVE BEEN VIOLATED. AND NO ONE HAS BEEN HURT. I'D JUST AS SOON KEEP IT THAT WAY.

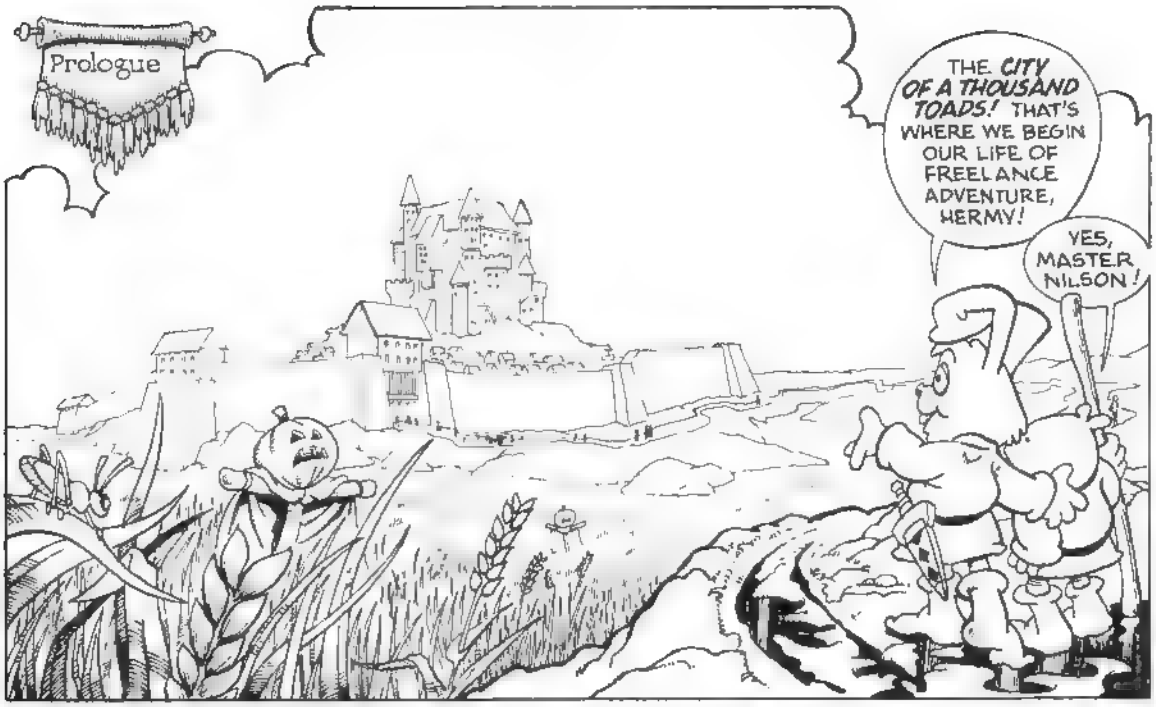
oh shit! they're going to rush the fence!
ON MY COMMAND!

POSITION!
Khai, I don't believe this!

ARM!


Ehah! Eat dust!


oh damn - Get an up-link with that flyer - keep the crowd dispersed. ooh, that hurts. Maximum restraint of force.


Prologue
THE CITY OF A THOUSAND TOADS! THAT'S WHERE WE BEGIN OUR LIFE OF FREELANCE ADVENTURE, HERMY!
YES, MASTER NILSON!

COME ON, HERMY LET'S GO MEET OUR DESTINY!
MASTER NILSON! DON'T STEP IN THE...
SQUISH!

YUCK! ANIMALS SHOULDN'T BE ALLOWED ON THESE ROADS! THEY STIR UP THE MUD AND EVERYTHING!
SCRAPE SCRAPE! SCRAPE! SCRAPE!
BLECH! ...AND EVERYTHING!

HERMY, GET THE CAPE OFF THAT OLD SCARECROW SO'S I CAN WIPE OFF MY SHOES!
FER SURE, MASTER NILSON!

HEY, THIS ISN'T HALF BAD! ON SECOND THOUGHT, I'LL JUST KEEP IT MYSELF! SURELY, THIS IS A GOOD OMEN, HERMY, NO DOUBT WE'LL BE HIRED AS BODYGUARDS FOR SOME RICH MERCHANT AS SOON AS WE ENTER THE CITY!
HERMY DID GOOD?

COME ON, HERMY! LET'S GO MEET OUR DESTINY!
SQUISH

THE ADVENTURES of NILKON GROUNDTHUMPER AND HERMY

FIVE WEEKS IN THE *CITY OF A THOUSAND TOADS* AND NOT *ONE* JOB OFFER!

THIS SWORD FOR HIRE BUSINESS IS A LOT HARDER THAN WE THOUGHT, HERMY!

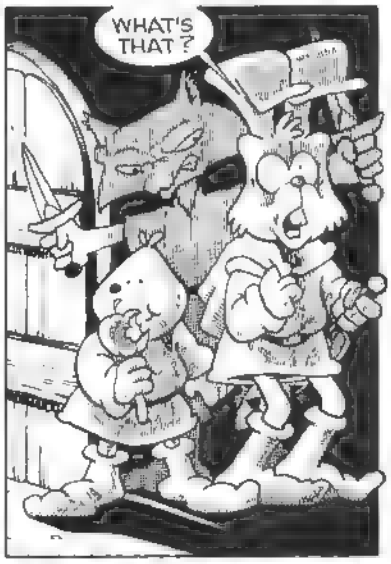
UGLY BARBARIAN.

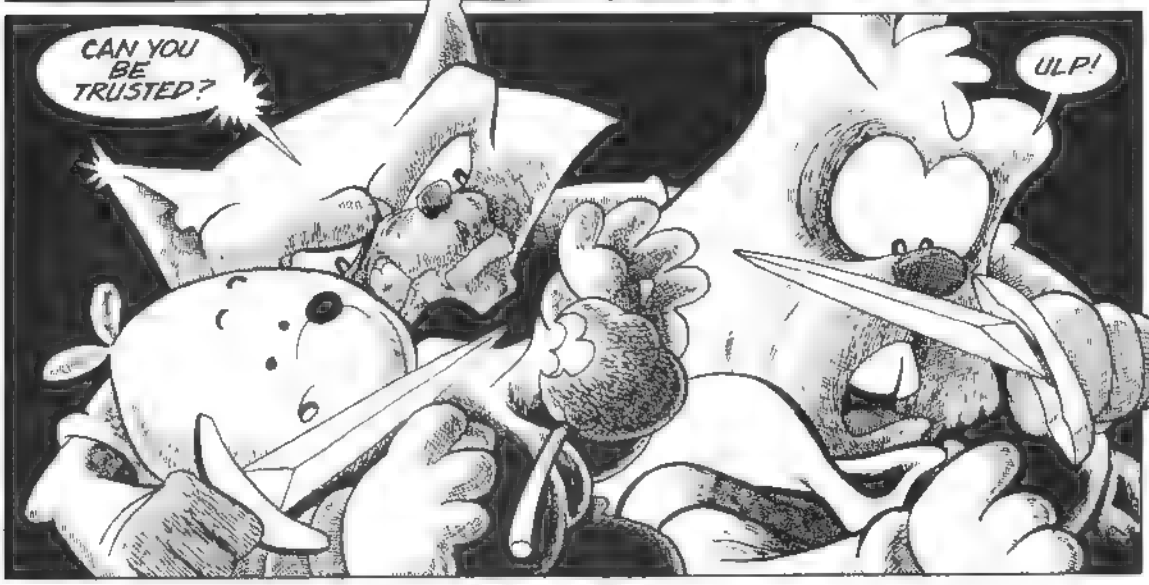
THEN FOLLOW ME!

I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU TWO EVER SINCE YOU ENTERED THE CITY..

...AND YOU LOOKED LIKE EXCELLANT CRIMINAL MATERIAL.
WHAT'RE YOUR NAMES?

I'M NILSON GROUNDTHUMPER AND THIS IS MY COMPANION, HERMY!
H'LO.
COME IN HERE. I'VE GOT JUST ONE MORE QUESTION TO ASK...

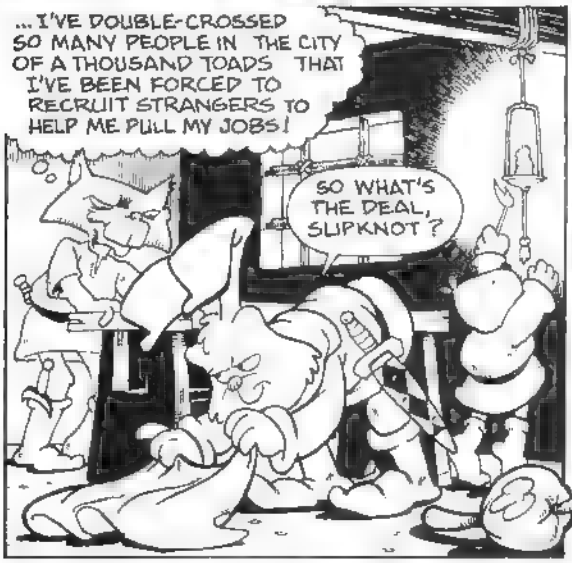

WHAT'S THAT?


CAN YOU BE TRUSTED?
ULP!

OF COURSE! WE'RE TRUSTWORTHY THIEVES! WE CAN EVEN GIVE YOU REFERENCES!

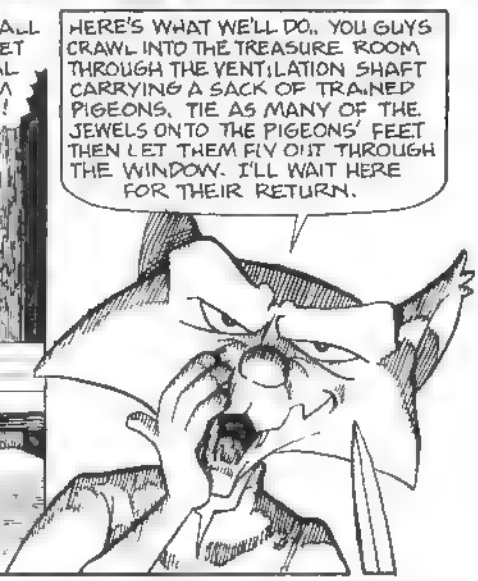
OKAY, BUT ONE WRONG MOVE AND YOU'RE BOTH DEAD MEAT!
NOW LIGHT THE LAMPS!
Y-YES, SIR!

HA! THE FOOLS SHOULD ASK IF I CAN BE TRUSTED...


...I'VE DOUBLE-CROSSED SO MANY PEOPLE IN THE CITY OF A THOUSAND TOADS THAT I'VE BEEN FORCED TO RECRUIT STRANGERS TO HELP ME PULL MY JOBS!
SO WHAT'S THE DEAL, SLIPKNOT?

OKAY, HERE'S THE CAPER... WE'RE GOING AFTER THE CROWN JEWELS OF KING KILBUN. INTERESTED?
HA! JUST THE KIND OF JOB WE'RE SUITED FOR!
ER... MIND IF I HANG MY CAPE?

PSST: ONCE WE LEARN HIS PLAN, WE'LL TURN HIM IN TO THE KING AND COLLECT A BIG REWARD!
I'LL LET THESE TWO TAKE ALL THE RISKS AND ONCE I GET MY HANDS ON THE ROYAL JEWELS, I'LL LET THEM TAKE THE RAP! HA! HA!
"LEARN HIS PLAN" CHORTLE HEE HEE!


HERE'S WHAT WE'LL DO. YOU GUYS CRAWL INTO THE TREASURE ROOM THROUGH THE VENTILATION SHAFT CARRYING A SACK OF TRAINED PIGEONS. TIE AS MANY OF THE JEWELS ONTO THE PIGEONS' FEET THEN LET THEM FLY OUT THROUGH THE WINDOW. I'LL WAIT HERE FOR THEIR RETURN.

AND WE CRAWL BACK OUT THROUGH THE VENTILATION SHAFT AND MEET BACK HERE TO SPLIT THE LOOT! CLEVER PLAN!
"PLAN!"
NOW DO WE TURN HIM IN, MASTER?
HUH?
WHAT?!
TRAITORS!!
STAND BACK, BLABBERMOUTH!
THUD!
CLAK!
SKULKING IN THE SHADOWS IS MORE YOUR STYLE OF FIGHTING, SLIPKNOT...

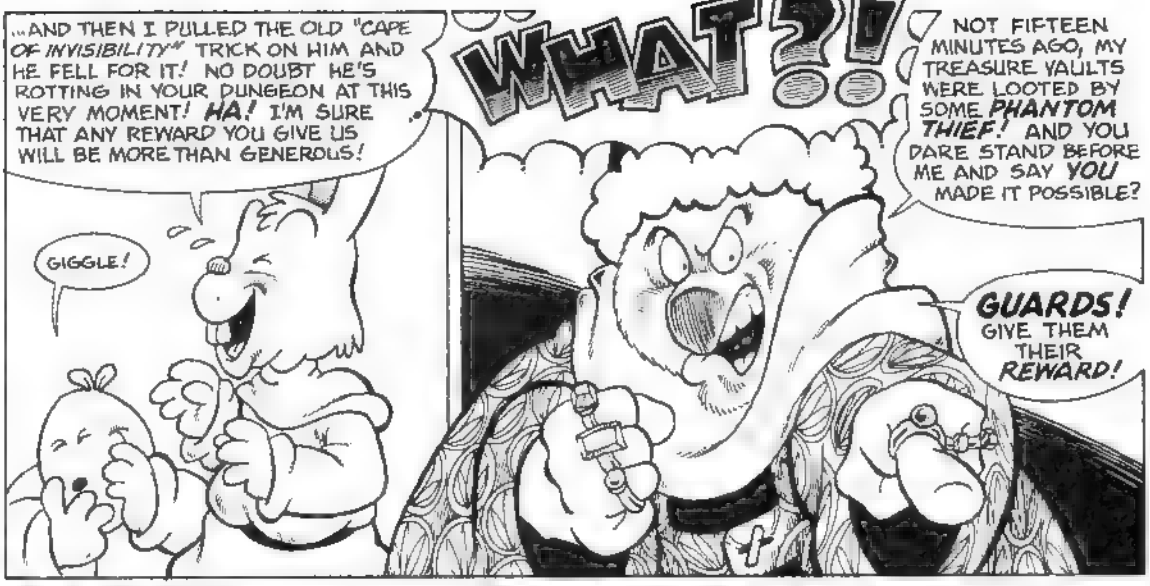
BUT THIS TIME, I'M READY FOR YOU
CLANG!
VWIP!
GIVE UP?
YOW!
ULP!
TRIP!
BONK
AHA!
WAIT A MINUTE, SLIPKNOT, LET'S MAKE A DEAL!
WHAT'VE YOU GOT TO DEAL WITH, YOU SLUG SNOT?
ER.. A... MY.. CAPE!
WHAT?
SURE... IT'S A MAGIC CAPE... OF... OF INVISIBILITY!
HUH?

WE STOLE IT FROM AN EVIL MAGICIAN SO THAT WE COULD BECOME MASTER THIEVES!
"MAGICIAN?"
NO, MASTER! WE STOLE IT FROM A SCARECROW SO'S WE COULD WIPE OFF THE SH-- :MMMUPH:
GIMME THAT!
THIS IS A CAPE OF INVISIBILITY? LOOKS LIKE AN OLD RAG TO ME!
GULP!
WELL, IT HAD BETTER WORK!
WHAT? WHERE'D YOU GO?
BUT, MASTER, HE'S RIGHT OVER TH-- :MMUMPH:
WHY, YOU LYING WORMBAG! I CAN STILL SEE MYSELF!

OF COURSE! THAT'S BECAUSE YOUR EYE BALLS ARE INVISIBLE TOO! EVERYONE KNOWS THAT INVISIBLE EYES CAN SEE INVISIBLE THINGS! THAT'S HOW GHOSTS CAN RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER IN HAUNTED HOUSES!
HUH? OH YEAH! I-I FORGOT.
>MUMPH<
YOU DID?!
WELL, SINCE YOU CAN SEE YOURSELF, THAT PROVES...>EEOUCH<
...THAT I'M INVISIBLE!
YEAH!
CHOMP!
HA! I'VE NEVER BEEN INVISIBLE BEFORE! I FEEL POWERFUL! NO VAULT IN THE CITY WILL BE SAFE FROM MY THIEVERY!
RIGHT! NOW WE'LL BE ABLE TO STEAL THE CROWN JEWELS WITH NO TROUBLE, YOU BEING INVISIBLE!
HEH! HEH! >CHORTLE< I GET IT NOW, MASTER! IT'S A TRICK!
SURE! SLIPKNOT IS INVISIBLE! WHERE IS HE? WHERE IS HE? HA! HA! >OWCH!<
SMAK!
SHADDAP!
HA! WHO NEEDS YOU TWO? WITH THIS MAGIC CAPE, I'LL BECOME THE TERROR OF THE CITY! HA! HA! HAAA!
WHEW! I THOUGHT WE WERE GONERS FOR SURE!
BYE, BYE, MISTER KLIPSNOT!

HA! SOMETIMES MY CUNNING AMAZES EVEN ME, HERMY
HK!
NO DOUBT KING KILBUN WILL SHOWER US WITH RICHES AFTER HE HEARS WHAT WE'VE DONE!

YOU SAY YOU'VE GOT INFORMATION ABOUT MY JEWELS? WELL, OUT WITH IT! I'VE GOT A LOT ON MY ROYAL MIND!
WELL, YOUR MAJESTY, IT ALL STARTED FIVE WEEKS AGO WHEN I STEPPED IN SOME DISGUSTING...


...AND THEN I PULLED THE OLD "CAPE OF INVISIBILITY" TRICK ON HIM AND HE FELL FOR IT! NO DOUBT HE'S ROTTING IN YOUR DUNGEON AT THIS VERY MOMENT! HA! I'M SURE THAT ANY REWARD YOU GIVE US WILL BE MORE THAN GENEROUS!
GIGGLE!
WHAT?!
NOT FIFTEEN MINUTES AGO, MY TREASURE VAULTS WERE LOOTED BY SOME PHANTOM THIEF! AND YOU DARE STAND BEFORE ME AND SAY YOU MADE IT POSSIBLE?
GUARDS! GIVE THEM THEIR REWARD!

HERMY DOESN'T LIKE THIS REWARD, MASTER NILSON. MAYBE WE SHOULD HAVE KEPT THE MAGIC CAPE SO WE COULD SNEAK OUT OF HERE, INVISIBLE LIKE.
BUT IT WAS A TRICK, HERMY! A TRICK! THE MAGIC CAPE DOESN'T WORK!
...OR DOES IT?

Dear Sir:

I have recently purchased TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES #4. I enjoyed this issue so much that I would like to buy issues 1, 2, and 3. Could you send a price list on how much each copy will cost.

SCOTT SANFORD
PIEDMONT, CA

Oh oh

Howdy!

TMNT Rules. I love it! I caught your address inside of TMNT #4. Enclosed please find $2.50 (sorry about the change) for TMNT #1 any printing will do! Thanx.

GARY SILKSTONE
CALGARY ALTA.
CANADA

And again.

Dear Mr. Gallacci,

Please send me copies of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles numbers 1 and 2, ...

It's amazing how many letters get written to the first address found in a publication. I've gotten at least a half dozen TMNT letters so far. No, lots more. I can't help but wonder how many people actually bother to READ these 'zines? uhm.

Hiya Steve,

Well, the Erma story in NR 4, all things considered, is, I think, the best to date — both graphically & literally. I much prefer typeset word balloons to hand lettered; especially in an SF strip. It adds a certain air of technological sophistication to the whole affair. I do think, however, that you should make an attempt to further distinguish the computer's captions with that of narrative's. Possibly give it a different typeface or a unique balloon arrow or somesuch.

I really liked the lighting & composition of panel 3, page 7. Its nifty astronomical/technological type shots like that, that set Erma visually far above all other SF comics in the field (are there any other SF comics in the field?!); It's real nice space art.

The backgrounds in this issue looked simplified, but I suspect it is just a casualty of a bi-monthly schedule (and doing *real* work to boot). I really do like the touch of the defocused backgrounds—makes the whole thing look like an animation cel.

I'm glad you popped in some tech-stuff in this issue. How about in the future doing a detailed 3-view of DH270 with weapon, crew & performance stats? Or maybe a rough map of "Known Space"? And merchandizing ideas — How about offering an EDF patch? Eh?!

I'm glad you reprinted Nr 0 — it was worth the wait — But do the EDF really use giant robots? "Robotech: The EDF Saga": You'll sell a million — and get your ass sued to boot!

ROB CASWELL
AMHERST, MA

Yeah, reprinting Nr 0 seems to have been a good tactic. Other merchandizing? Sure, why not? Additional background will be on-going. Actually, I'm lazy and slow and rush the art through at the last minute. More important, the insides of starships are bland. I don't know about you, but I like the idea of having all the plumbing behind removeable armored panels, in tasteful decorator colors, of course. Nr 4 did have different typefaces, but not different enough.

Hey, got #4 a few days ago. great. I'm very impressed by your writing. The story line is engrossingly complex and credible. You obviously put as much attention on the plot as on the illustrations. I find that very rare, not just in the comics media, but in SF in general. Megabuck movies like Star Wars are certainly the worst offenders. After six hours of visual flash and fury you're left with a plot which could be told in six minutes! They even blew up the Deathstar twice, it was so thin. Felna, in contrast, takes several readings to absorb all the subtle intricacies.

Your technical detail is excellent and adds much to the story's credibility, but I find the anatomical credibility very low. Critters whose extremities end with hooves and fins just aren't going to be putting on spacesuits and flying space ships, quite aside from the philosophical question of whether creatures with out manipulative organs could evolve to higher intelligence. I notice that Itzak eats, but never is seen to lift a cup or fork. He also changes clothes without benefit of "hand". I know I'm just nit-picking, but is does clash with your otherwise superb techical detail.

The Prowler 'bots are well designed. They remind me of "Hadrian" an anti-terrorist robot designed in England about two years ago. Hadrian could, as I recall, travel five miles per hour, was television guided, could climb stairs, break down doors, fire a submachine gun, dispense tear gas and "break a man's legs". (What would Asimov say!) I never saw a photo, only press reports, but Hadrian was produced and sold to a number of Police and Security agencies.

GREG REYNOLDS
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Now what a minute, in an industry that regularly does a dickdance on science, literature, and reality itself, I can't have beasties without conventional manipulative organs? Gee, yer no fun. And who said they evolved? Seriously now, they have perfectly functional manipulative powers, they just keep 'em "off camera". He he he.

As for the lead story; I thought Tomo Ame died last issue? . . . oh, not quite, I've seen this kind of thing before, but false death creates false drama and you can't play it both ways without cheating. I *do* like the rest of the tale, especially Groo's cameo and finding out Hijiki is a *human* character!

Onward to Erma Felna; The storytelling style, I feel improves tremendously with this chapter. The first page breifs the readers with the news/letters from home/DH270 mission report and even manages to feed us new information. The conversation between

computer and Capt. Arrat contains some nicely done foreshortening and we learn more about him as a person here. From there on, it's good, straight forward suspense and action and more is learned as the story unfolds. The ending with the Captain again is perfect for the chapter. No more sudden shifts in the setting.

Albedo is a slower-paced book than most comics that rush an entire story through 2 or 3 issues. This is a good thing; Your strips would lose a lot if quickened. When completed, Erma Felna should be enough to be a fair-sized funny animal novel.

The wealth of background information in #4 is very welcome. Erma Felna is no longer a difficult-to-follow strip; now everything is laid out on the table and requires no repeated readings.

I think your inner back cover plugs are a good thing; Alternative and Independent publishers should help each other out anyway they can (I only learned of *Albedo* through *Cutey Bunny* and was one of a handful who bugged my favorite comics dealer to carry *Albedo* . . .)

Back Cover: "Penguins in space!" made me laugh, and yet this is the essence of your strip: funny animals in a science fiction setting with a serious storyline. I've seen death, now where's the sex and rock'n'roll you hinted at in issue #1?

PETER STOLLER
SPRING VALLEY, NY

Oh boy! Albedo Nr 4! And *only* a month late. Compared to the norm for small publishing ventures, you should be proud of that!

Cartooning out of your area of expertise? Bah! Albedo is one of the few things I look forward to getting in the mail. And yes, I do appreciate you putting out the effort to get decent printing on decent paper (Yes, I sympathize, being a commercial artist myself). I like deep, rich blacks on paper thick enough that the blacks on the next page don't show through. I also like it when the printing is good enough that airbrushing and ink washes don't get faded into whiteness.

DAVID RAINS
KNOXVILLE, TN

*Thank you. Nyah, nyah, nyah to all you "who gives a flying * ! @ # ! about the repro" snerts!*
Hope you-all enjoyed the ish. One of these years I'll get some worthwhile inking together and come out with something that I can feel really comfortable with. I'm finally coming out with some reply cards to make sure all mail is getting through and cut down a little on the monthly postage bill. If you want long and involved responses please send SASEs. It will make it a lot easier on all concerned.

HI AGAIN, AND SOME MORE LAST MINUTE HOLE FILLER. PART OF THE PROBLEM IS THAT UNLIKE "THE BIG BOYS", WHO START WORK ON AN ISSUE AS MUCH AS SIX MONTHS IN ADVANCE, I'M LUCKY TO GIVE MYSELF SIX WEEKS, THEN I GET DISTRACTED BY CONVENTIONS AND THE DAY-TO-DAY BUSINESS OF A FREELANCE ARTIST WHO'S ALSO PUTTING OUT A COMIC'ZINE. SO THERE'S A LOT OF LAST-DITCH SCRAMBLING TO GET THE 'ZINE OUT ON TIME.

THE ONLY POSITIVE ASPECT IS THAT I CAN WRITE-UP SOMETHING THAT WILL STILL BE TIMELY BY THE TIME YOU GET TO READ IT. FER INSTANCE, IT'S 8 OCTOBER, THIS MORNING BEFORE THE 'ZINE GOES TO THE PRINTER, AND IT'S A GOOD BET THAT MOST OF YOU WILL HAVE COPIES IN HAND WITHIN THE NEXT COUPLE OF WEEKS. SO, IF I'VE SOMETHING WORTHWHILE TO PASS ON, YOU-ALL WILL BE THE FIRST TO KNOW.

AND THE LETTERS-OF-COMMENT ARE PRETTY-MUCH UPTODATE, TOO. I'LL BE PRINTING MORE OF THEM TOO, JUST MIS-PLANNED THIS ISSUE.

THINKING ABOUT CONVENTIONS, I GO TO A LOT OF SCIENCE-FICTION CONS, AND HAVE ALL MANNER OF ART AND SUCH TO SELL. I ALSO LIKE TO SEE WHO'S BUYING THE 'ZINE AND CAN ANSWER QUESTIONS AND BE PERSONABLE AND ALL THOSE P.R. KIND OF THINGS.

A PARTIAL LIST — ORYCON 8-10 NOV. '85 PORTLAND, OR. LOSCON 29 NOV-1 DEC '85, PASADENA, CA. RUSTYCON 17-19 JAN. '86 SEATTLE. NORWESCON 20-23 MARCH '86 SEATTLE, MISCON 16-18 MAY '86 MISSOULA, WESTERCON 3-6 JULY SAN DIEGO, CONFEDERATION/WORLDCON 28 AUG-1 SEPT '86 ATLANTA. CONSPIRACY/WORLDCON AUG 27-SEPT. 2 '87 BRIGHTON, ENGLAND. NEXT ISSUE I'LL HAVE A MORE COMPLETE LIST, INCLUDING COMIC-CONS AND ADDRESSES, TOO.

STEVE GALLACCI

Here's a bunch of stuff I happen to like and thought you-all might like to know about to.

Matt Howarth, who some of you may or may not recognize, has the ever dangerous **Those Annoying Post Brothers**, published by Vortex Comics. He also has gallons of mini and worse comic kind of things that his (?) Howski Studios publish. Among the most recent is the intensely different **WRAB Pirate Television**, which I can't recommend highly enough! Right up there with Ellison's **Glass Teat**! For that and all manner of other mundo bizarro, avant garde sort of kind of stuff write: Howski Studios, Box 804, Langhorne, PA 19047.

Thinking of Vortex Comics again, **Mister X** is a true delight. It's not funny, there's no muscles in leotards, just this skinny guy with glasses who's into psychetecture — a subject closer to reality than you might fear. If you can't find him on the racks: Vortex Comics, 36 Spadina Ave. 9th Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5V 2J6, Canada.

Fantagraphics Books has a lot of high class titles out, the best will be the soon to be released **Critters** with appearances of Joshua Quagmire's Qutey Bunny, Freddy Milton's whatever those things are, Stan Sakai's Usagi Yojimbo, and me! But until then, **Love and Rockets** is probably their best title going. There's a refreshing touch of the third world in the semi-science fiction slice of life scenarios in each issue. Finally something that isn't adolescent white male middle class! What a relief! For this and much more: Fantagraphics Books, 707 Camino Manzanas, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360.

Here's the Usagi Yojimbo T-shirt ad I forgot to run in Nr. 4. That's not Stan Sakai's address, just the printer's. I'm not sure, but I think the shirt goes for $11.50, including postage and all that.

Stan Sakai's USAGI YOJIMBO is now available as a four-color T-shirt design. Information:
Hawaiian Funnies
1306 Kahili St.
Kailua, Hawaii
96734

If you want to see a little of what Stan Sakai does for real money, get a copy of Sergio Aragones' **Groo the Wanderer**. When Stan isn't doing high class commercial stuff, he's a sharp letterer.

Ha! Funny animals in space! Yes, and they really are! **Space Ark** is lightweight comic stuff in a, uhm, ah, gee, I don't know for sure kind of Sixties sort style, chuck full of lethal puns. AC Comics, at Box 1216, Longwood, FL 32750.

So, he wears long underwear and flies across the furthest reaches of space, as long as he stays away from science or technology, **Nexus** is about the most enjoyable S.F. super hero title I'm aware of. I'm a serious hard science kind of guy and not above nit picking, but the art and characterization more than make up for such. Clonezone is silly fun too. First Comics Publishing, 1014 Davis Street, Evanston, IL 60201.

Cerebus needs no explanation, buy every copy before your nostril hairs burst into flames. Aardvark-Vanaheim Inc., Box 1674 Station "C," Kitchener, Ontario N2G 4R2, Canada.

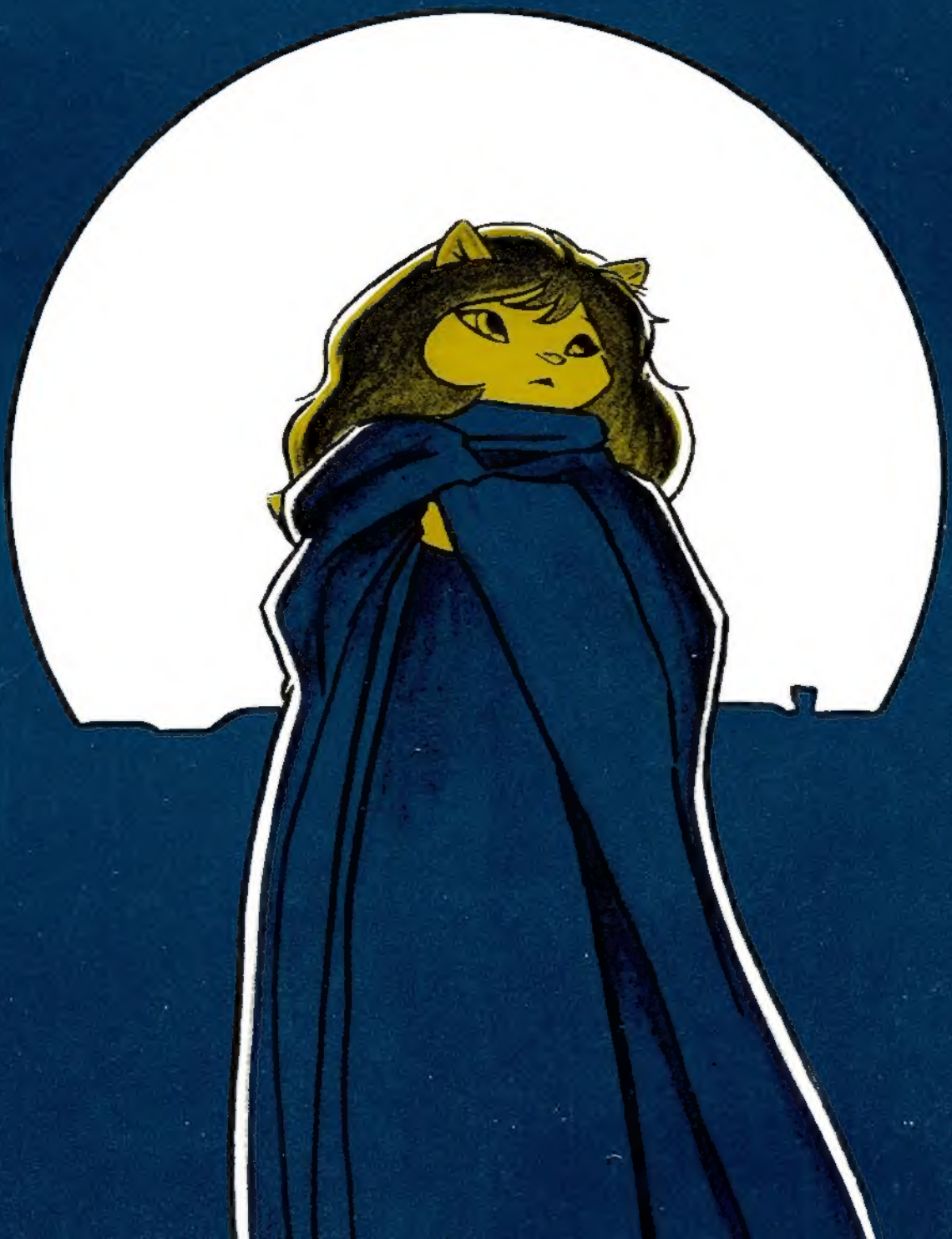
For all you adolescent genetic anomaly martial arts funny animal fans, have I got something for you! **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles** is alive and well! Issue Nr 4 is just out, along with that ultimate in mini series, mini series. Bother them at Mirage Studios, P.O. Box 1218, Sharon, CT 06069.

Army Surplus Comics, Featuring Cutey Bunny. Well, since many of you first found out about me through Josh's zine, you've already been seduced by that bouncy bombshell. On the other hand, if you haven't, it has everything Albedo doesn't: laughs, in-jokes, wholesome family entertainment, plenty of skin, and that comfortable, nostalgic feeling I get when I watch all the Saturday afternoon reruns of comedy films made before I was born. J.Q. Enterprises, P.O. Box 2221, Hollywood, CA 90078.

For something a bit different, try **Equine the Uncivilized**. Funny funny-animal sword and sorcery? Sure, why not? Equine, P.O. Box 32292, Tucson, AZ 85751.

Tales of the Beanworld, a most peculiar comic book experience. And, yes, it is. The graphics are simple, maybe even too simple for some, and one has to read it, another drawback to others, but I think it's a delightful tale and well worth one's time. Done by the Beanworld Press, Inc., 7060 N. Sheridan, Chicago, IL 60626, and distributed by Eclipse Comics.

For mature audiences only, Reed Waller's **"Omaha," the Cat Dancer** has life in the city adventure coupled with anthropomorphic erotica. Neat! Published by SteelDragon Press, P.O. Box 7253, Powderhorn Station, Minneapolis, MN 55407.

And finally, **Mythadventures**. As one might notice, it's not exactly the book, but I've always liked this vision of Garkin. (He looks a little like me when I sported facial hair, and I can't resist tragic figures). It's a lot different than **Elfquest**, so all you snobs don't have to dismiss it immediately (I *liked* E.Q.!) So say hi to the crowd in Poughkeepsie: Warp Graphics, 5 Reno Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.

Remember — bug your retailers and distributors for the neat stuff before you poot harassing letters off to all these wonderful people.